Constructing Spaces of Knowledge in Türkiye: An Analysis of the Republican Period[*]

Türkiye'de Bilgi Mekanları İnşası: Cumhuriyet Dönemi Üzerine Bir İnceleme

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Abstract

This article critically examines the transformative commitment to modernization and nation-building in Turkish Republic, focusing on the pivotal role played by spaces of knowledge. The study begins with a theoretical analysis of the complex relationship between political power, knowledge and space. The concrete analysis starts with the examination of People's Houses, envisioned as cultural and political centers spreading Republican principles and the new national identity. The analysis extends to museums established by the new regime, demonstrating their ideological underpinnings as spaces generating a specific knowledge on the nation through the collection of memories. The article then explores theaters, cinemas, and operas, emphasizing their contribution to shaping cultural policies of the new Turkish nation state. Shifting to libraries, it traces the historical evolution culminating in the establishment of the National Library in Ankara and its role in nation-building process. Throughout, the article delves into the complexities of preserving national identity through these spaces of knowledge, offering a comprehensive understanding of Türkiye's modernization journey.

Key Words: Spaces of Knowledge, Turkish Republic, Nation-Building, Modernization, National Identity

Öz

Bu çalışma Türkiye'nin cumhuriyet döneminde modernleşme ve ulus-inşa süreçlerinde bilgi mekanlarının hayati rolünü incelemektedir. Sunmuş olduğu teorik çerçeve kapsamında, makale öncelikle iktidar, bilgi ve mekân arasındaki karmaşık ilişkiyi incelemektedir. Somut süreçlerin analizi, yeni kurulan Cumhuriyet'in ilkelerini ve yeni ulusal kimliğini geniş halk kesimlerine yayan, kültürel ve politik merkezler haline gelen Halkevlerinin incelenmesiyle başlamaktadır. Ardından, yeni rejimin inşa ettiği müzeleri inceleyerek bu kültürel kurumların 'ulus' ile ilgili bilgi yaratan ideolojik rollerini analiz etmektedir. Bunu takiben tiyatro, sinema ve operaların yeni Türk ulus devletinin kültürel politikalarına katkısı ele alınmaktadır. Son olarak, Ankara'da kurulan Milli Kütüphane'nin tarihsel süreci ve ulus inşasındaki rolü tartışılmaktadır. İlgili mekanların analiziyle, bu makale bilgi mekanları aracılığıyla ulus kimliği inşa süreçlerinin karmaşık yapısını ele alarak, Türkiye'nin modernleşme sürecinde mekânın rolünü ortaya koymaktadır.

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Giriş

The early decades of the Turkish Republic witnessed a relentless effort on modernization, cultural enrichment, and the construction of a unitary national identity. At the center of this transitional era lie the foundations of modern institutions that shape the contours of a unified Turkish identity. This article explores the historical development of various spaces of knowledge in Türkiye since the early Republican period, analyzing their pivotal role in the development of 'knowledge' and national identity. The examination of these spaces of knowledge in Türkiye not only presents as a historical record but also puts forth the construction of knowledge through institutionalization during the modernization process. The interplay between these spaces and the shifting political landscape encourages consideration of the complex relationship between constructing national identity and the role of cultural institutions during the Republican period.

To comprehend the historical role carried by these spaces is to grasp their foundation in Türkiye's modernization process. These spaces, far from being mere physical entities, emerge as essential components in the construction and perpetuation of a national narrative. A thorough exploration displays the multiple efforts undertaken to generate a modern cultural identity in Türkiye. Therefore, the interplay between these spaces of knowledge and the changing political landscape enables the representation of Türkiye's modernization efforts since the early Republican period.

Starting with the theoretical exploration of spaces of knowledge, the article critically examines the intricate relationship between power, knowledge, and space. This theoretical analysis aims to reveal how certain spaces are meticulously designed and utilized by political powers to spread the intended national identity to the broader segments of society. The theoretical section concentrates on the exploration of various 'archetypes', each representing a distinct facet of the nation's modernization efforts. The analysis of the role of these institutions for political power in constructing a national identity through generating spaces that ease the control on knowledge is the focal point of the theoretical section.

Following this examination, the article moves to an analysis of People's Houses, envisioned as cultural spaces designed to spread Republican principles to every corner of the new Republic. These houses have become influential spaces fostering the cultural identity of the newly established nation state. As an architectural representation of the ideological universe of the new Republic, People's Houses transcended their physicality and became spaces where the Republic principles were learned and lived.

Transitioning into the realm of museums, the study examines the

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complex relationship between art, culture, and national identity. From the establishment of ethnography museums to the unique Exhibition House in Ankara, various cultural institutions formed to structure the ideological underpinnings of the new nation around a specific historical heritage. In this context, artifacts and artworks serve as vehicles that narrate a nation's story. As analyzed in detail, these museums serve a purpose of constructing a culture that projects the "regime of truth" envisioned by the state.

The article then moves to the examination of performing arts, through focusing on theaters, cinemas, and operas within the narrative of Turkish nation building. Integrated into People's Houses, state conservatories, and ultimately the State Opera and Ballet, emerge as pioneers shaping cultural policies of the new nation. The theaters and cinemas, especially with the increased film production during the 1950s, signify the transformative role of these spaces in shaping the broader national cultural identity.

Following this, the exploration shifts its focus to the pivotal role played by the National Library, emphasizing the broader role of libraries beyond mere physical spaces. Tracing its roots back to the Ottoman period, the article examines developments that culminated in the establishment of the National Library in Ankara. Far from being physical buildings, libraries are dynamic entities serving as the collective memory of a nation, connecting its past with present through the control over knowledge. This analysis through Türkiye's spaces of knowledge in the Republican period demonstrates the complex relationship between cultural policies, space making and nation building. Each space of knowledge, from People's Houses fostering the Republican ideals to libraries preserving the collective memory, represents the construction of nation's identity through space making.

Spaces of Knowledge as an Intersect of Power, Knowledge and Space

In Michel Foucault's[1] exploration of knowledge and its influence in daily life, he underscores the omnipresence of power with the statement, 'power is everywhere.'[2] The presence of power in everywhere means that power is inseparable from the specific spaces it inhabits. This prompts an analysis of the spaces in which political power functions and, consequently, shaping our comprehension of the spaces of knowledge. Space is significant not only for understanding social ordering but also it is the physical environment in which social institutions in modern societies function. In this sense, it is reductionist to consider space as a mere physical environment. In Henri Lefebvre's famous statement, "space is a social product",[3] the process between space and the experience of space is well documented, as the author presented the

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1   Michel Foucault, Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977, Pantheon, New York 1980.

2   Paul Veyne, Foucault: His Thought, His Character, Polity Press, Cambridge 2010, p. 93.

3   Henri Lefebvre, The Production of Space, Blackwell, Oxford and Cambridge 1991.

characteristics of space in order to exhibit its social essence and its relationship with knowledge.

In addition to Lefebvre's notable argument, Meusburger[4] presents a different perspective regarding the relationship between space and social structures. Meusburger contends that constructed spaces, environments, and tangible spatial constructs not only enable and guide human actions but also impose certain constraints.[5] They configure patterns of face-to-face interaction, giving rise to network formation and collective action. These spatial elements through generating durable social structures and institutions, also determine social behaviors and therefore sociality. In this sense, it is necessary to define how space influences social structures and knowledge encounters. This requires an examination of several dynamics related with space, which can be illustrated as its physical, institutional, or functional identities. The notion of heterotopia, as delineated in Foucault's writings, emerges as a significant concept for comprehending the role of space in knowledge production.[6] It serves as a crucial term, shedding light on how space has been utilized as a tool to forge new forms of social organization with utopian aspirations. Heterotopia, in this sense, is a space with a different kind of arrangement, shaped by specific ideals and by the tension between the concepts of freedom and control in modern societies. It represents a unique way in which modernity has been expressed spatially.[7]

Foucault exemplifies heterotopias as schools, military service, old people's homes, psychiatric institutions, prisons, cemeteries, theatres, cinemas, libraries, museums, fairs, carnivals, motels etc.[8] In this formulation, since libraries and museums are considered as the spaces of accumulation of everything from diverse periods, they constitute a distinctive knowledge on modern identities. Foucault states that "accumulating everything, the idea of establishing a sort of general archive, the will to enclose in one place all times, all epochs, all forms, all tastes, the idea of constituting a place of all times that is itself outside of time, and inaccessible to its ravages, the project of organizing in this way a sort of perpetual and indefinite accumulation of time in a place that will not move"[9] is a modern effort, which is a characteristic of Western culture in the nineteenth century.

Similar to Foucault, Burke[10] also examines the entangled relations-

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4   Peter Meusburger, "The Nexus of Knowledge and Space", Peter Meusburger, Michael Welker, Edgar Wunder eds., Clashes of Knowledge: Orthodoxies and Heterodoxies in Science and Religion, Springer, Dordrecht 2008.

5   Ibid., p.47.

6   Kevin Hetherington, The Badlands of Modernity: Heterotopia and Social Ordering, Routledge, London and New York 2003, p.53.

7   Ibid. p. ix-x.

8   Michel Foucault, Heterotopia and the City: Public Spaces in a Postcivil society, Routledge, London and New York 2008.

9   Ibid. p.20.

10   Peter Burke, The Social History of Knowledge: From Gutenberg to Diderot, Polity Press, Cambridge 2008.

hip between knowledge and its spaces. While Burke concentrates mainly on the academic knowledge, he identifies diverse sets of knowledge according to specific oppositions such as public-private, theoretical-practical, liberal-useful, and higher-lower. For him, academic knowledge is functioning within three subsystems, the "curricula, libraries and encyclopedias."[11] Within these systems, libraries are viewed as a space, which through the classification and order of books makes the knowledge material, physical, and spatial.[12]

In this regard, the spatial dimension of knowledge production or how knowledge conditions space should be examined in the light of an understanding of space, as a medium of practicing power-knowledge relationship. Despite of this, the concept of knowledge has been highly neglected within architectural theory. In fact, the relationship between architecture and knowledge can be revealed by describing, understanding, or analyzing architecture as a discipline. Since architecture is shaping the accumulated knowledge into comprehensible forms, both architectural forms and theory are influenced by wider social mechanisms. Alberto Pérez-Gómez[13] describes architecture in relation to knowledge by emphasizing its historical role. As he states, a holistic comprehension of architecture, extending beyond a myopic view of history or a scientific preoccupation with self-referentiality, methods, or objectivity, requires a deep understanding of its profound role in human culture, where history indicates that architecture has played a real and important role by allowing people to live on the earth.[14] This nature of architecture prevents its separation from other disciplines that deal with society.[15] In this sense, buildings, as physical products composed of structural entities and environmental modifiers, are functional in social, cultural and economic dimensions. This framework suggests that architecture should be conceived as a field producing spaces for the operation of power and production of knowledge.[16]

In the modern world, for consolidation of the national identity, cultural spaces are institutionalized and instrumentalized. With the emergence of modernity, these new institutions were structured as archetypes. The term "archetype" dates back to mid-16th century, and is derived from Greek *arkhetupon,* something molded first as a model.[17] In architecture, as well as in other disciplines, archetypes entail the means for creating space and related knowledge. Archetype, as a "form of knowledge", enables the analysis of the

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11   Ibid. p. 87.
12   Ibid, p. 92.
13   Alberto Pérez-Gómez, "Architecture as Embodied Knowledge", Journal of Architectural Education*, Vol. 40, No. 2, Winter 1987, p.57-58.
14   Ibid. p. 57.
15   Jeremy Till, "Three Myths and One Model", Building Material, No. 17, 2008, p.5.
16   Michael K. Hays, "Critical Architecture: Between Culture and Form", Perspecta, Vol. 21, 1984, p.15-29.
17   Oxford Learner's Dictionary, https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/archetype?q=archetype.

complex relationship between space, knowledge and power.[18] It also maintains that the architectural entity should not be viewed in isolation; rather, it is influenced by both social dynamics and historical context.[19] Within the context of space making, these archetypes serve as concrete examples illustrating how political power shapes society. Türkiye is not exception in this regard. With the modernization, spaces of knowledge were established for endorsing cultural activities in align with the national identity.

Spaces of Knowledge in Modern Türkiye

In the initial years of the Republican era, numerous initiatives were undertaken to embrace modernity, shape the identity of the new nation, and foster cultural programs as a means of nation-building. Notably, a key aspect of these cultural endeavors involved the creation of modern institutions and spaces.[20] These institutions played a crucial role by actively contributing to the promotion of a unified national identity and the formation of a dominant culture aligned with the processes of nation-building. These institutions include those dedicated to the arts, such as museums, opera houses, theaters, and cinemas, as well as entities like the Turkish History Association (Türk Tarih Kurumu)[21] and Turkish Language Association (Türk Dil Kurumu). Additionally, there are institutes and educational establishments, such as schools and universities, aiming to facilitate modernization in education and culture. Concurrently, the very first ministry founded after the establishment of the new regime was the Ministry of National Education as it was founded in May, 1920. The organization of these institutions was a manifestation of the policies implemented by that particular regime.

Beside these institutions, the new state created its own cultural practices and spaces. Bookstores, pastries, restaurants and shops are the new spaces of modern culture, especially in the cities. For instance, Turan Tanyer traces the early bookstores in Ankara, which were influential on composing considerable urban habits between 1930-1960.[22] Since these stores were meeting places and spaces for interaction, the author reveals that they were designed to relocate and transform the city center from Ulus to Yenişehir. The creation of new spaces associated with the modernization efforts that aim to shape the everyday life are not limited to these initiatives. Further new programs are established to reshape the spaces of knowledge in accordance with the dynamics of the new society and identity, which give them the archety-

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18   Rafael Moneo, "On Typology", Oppositions, No. 13, 1978, pp.22-44.
19   Ibid.
20   Sevil Özçalık Dumanoğulları, "Cumhuriyet'e Mekân Yaratmak: İstanbul-Ankara İkiliğinin 'Kiralık Konak' ve 'Ankara' Romanlarına Yansıması", Mukaddime, Vol.11, No.2, 2020, p.297.
21   Erinç Erdal Yıldırım, "Official History Transformation of The Early Turkish Republic: Changes And Continuities Reflected in the Textbooks", Journal of International Social Research, Vol.7. No.31, 2014, pp.414-426.
22   Turan Tanyer, "About Bookstores of Ankara", Ankara Araştırmaları Dergisi, Vol.1, No.1, 2013, pp. 113-129.

pical characteristic. As these modern institutions and programs, are rooted in the early Republican period, the following part analyzes the most crucial archetypes and spaces of knowledge generated by the new regime, namely the People's Houses, museums, theaters, cinemas and operas, and lastly, the National Library.

People's Houses

Established in the early 1930s, People's Houses emerge as noteworthy spaces of knowledge from the early Republican era. Designed to be established in every city, with an initial target of 500 People's Houses,[23] these institutions aimed to elevate rural communities. They also served as a political instrument, motivated by the desire to propagate Republican values and foster a national identity. According to Karpat "[S]pecifically, the Houses were charged with the duty to establish a national culture based on Turkish folklore, teach the masses the Republican principles, eradicate illiteracy, and devise the means to raise the people's living standards. The purpose of People's Houses, thus, can be assembled in two categories, one cultural and the other political."[24]

Following the dissolution of Turkish Hearths (Türk Ocakları), recognized as antecedents of People's Houses,[25] their assets transitioned to the Republican Party. Subsequently, on February 19, 1932, People's Houses were officially established with fourteen branches.[26] In the following years, the number of People's Houses expanded rapidly.[27] The proliferation of People's Houses was swift, with a particular emphasis on library branches, a mandatory component for inauguration. The publication branch played a crucial role, publishing books and pamphlets prepared by the Houses themselves, leading to a substantial increase in book collections. As Karpat documents,[28] by 1940, People's Houses effectively managed 366 libraries, boasting an impressive collection of 462,817 books. Two years later, 267 libraries reported a cumulative attendance of 612,766 readers in their reading rooms. These substantial numbers not only reflect the quantitative success of People's Houses but also underscore their increasing impact as pivotal hubs for constructing the new national identity across the country.

The architectural structure of People's Houses has exhibited diversity, reflecting their intermediary role in the societal framework. Being or-

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23 Kemal H. Karpat, "The People's Houses in Turkey: Establishment and Growth", Middle East Journal, Vol. 17, No. ½, 1963, p. 61.

24 Kemal H. Karpat, "The Impact of the People's Houses on the Development of Communication in Turkey: 1931-1951", Die Welt des Islams, Vol. 15, No.1/4, 1974, p. 69.

25 For a detailed analysis see. Neşe Güralar Yeşilkaya, Halkevleri: İdeoloji ve Mimarlık, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul 1999.

26 Kemal H. Karpat, "The People's Houses in Turkey: Establishment and Growth", Middle East Journal, Vol. 17, No. ½, 1963, p. 58.

27 Ibid., p. 61.

28 Kemal H. Karpat, "The Impact of the People's Houses on the Development of Communication in Turkey: 1931-1951", Die Welt des Islams, Vol. 15, No.1/4, 1974, p 81.

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chestrated by the ruling party, these houses strategically maintain a local orientation to effectively engage with the local community. Consequently, the design and construction of People's Houses have manifested in various forms, considering their commitment to local needs. As indicated, not all the Houses were newly constructed facilities since some of them were created by restructuring the existing buildings or former Turkish Hearths. However, during the 1940s, a pivotal development occurred as the Ministry of Public Works took measures to address the challenges faced by People's Houses.[29] This era witnessed the establishment of an architectural bureau under the Ministry, aimed at resolving existing problems, providing structurally sound buildings, and enhancing their architectural structure. This shift also aspired to create buildings that were not just functional but visually appealing. It emphasized the state's concerted efforts to shape the architectural narrative of these spaces of knowledge, aligning their physical form with the evolving Turkish nation-state.

During the 1950s, as Türkiye transitioned into a multiparty system and the Democrat Party assumed governance, the closure of People's Houses, along with village institutes, took place. This decision was rooted in the perception of People's Houses being closely affiliated with the ruling Republican People's Party (RPP), which had proclaimed itself as the "agent of civilization" during the early Republican era in Türkiye.[30] This closure also reveals the archetypical structure of the People's Houses as a space of knowledge and its close connection with the political power. At the time of their closure, there were 478 Houses and 4322 People's rooms. The properties belonging to the Houses, and consequently to the RPP, were confiscated and their buildings were reassigned to different ministries, serving different functions. The collections in the library branches, on the other hand, remained ambiguous. According to Çakmak, due to the lack of a clear plan on how and where to transform them, the assets of these institutions, which included diverse documents, films, photographs, paintings, posters, and records spanning the 19-year period of the early Republic, along with over 600 thousand books, were predominantly lost or seized by opportunists.[31]

Museums

Despite the chaotic conditions observed in the later period of the Ottoman Empire, initiatives for modernization within the cultural sphere had already commenced years before the Empire's demise. Influential figures such as Osman Hamdi Bey and Seker Ahmet Pasha championed and introduced a European perspective on culture, art, and the establishment of museums,

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29   Neşe Gürallar Yeşilkaya, Halkevleri: İdeoloji ve Mimarlık, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul 1999, pp. 133-136.
30   Sibel Bozdoğan - Esra Akcan, Turkey: Modern Architectures in History, Reaktion Books, London 2012, p. 35.
31   Fevzi Çakmak, "Halkevlerinin Kapatılması ve Cumhuriyet Halk Partisinin Mallarına El Konulması", History Studies, Vol. 7, Issue 3, September 2015, p. 10.

archives, and collections. Osman Hamdi Bey, in particular, not only made significant artistic contributions but also played a crucial role in the preservation and presentation of archaeological sites. Thus, museums as archetypes had already taken root in the country, serving as spaces showcasing artifacts from earlier civilizations that the communal identity was based on.

Nevertheless, following the establishment of the modern Turkish Republic, significant endeavors have been undertaken to create new museums aligned with the emerging national identity. Legal measures were put in place to institutionalize the creation of these new spaces of knowledge and to develop a modern approach to museums. These can be exemplified by the establishment of the Antiquities and Museums Directorate in 1926, the designation of the Dolmabahçe Palace Crown Prince's Apartment (Dolmabahçe Sarayı Veliaht Dairesi) for the "State Museum of Painting and Sculpture" in 1937, the enactment of "The Law on the Protection of Intellectual and Artistic Works" (Fikir ve Sanat Eserleri Koruma Kanunu) in 1951, and the construction of the Atatürk Cultural Center in 1946, which officially opened (initially named Istanbul Culture Palace)[32] in 1969.

Despite the national sentiment in the early Republican period, foreign professionals have also been instrumental in the founding of museums in Türkiye, underscoring the influence of Western oriented modernization efforts in the construction of the national identity. Gyula Mezsaros, a Hungarian Turcologist, played a crucial role in the establishment of an ethnographical museum. The Ethnography Museum in Ankara, founded in 1930, holds the distinction of being the first museum inaugurated after the establishment of the Republic.[33] As a unique example of the early Republican period, the new regime also constructed the Exhibition House (Sergi Evi) in 1934 as a space of knowledge in Ankara. Furthermore, the State Museum of Painting and Sculpture represents another category of institutions initiated by the state across various cities. These establishments serve as vital spaces of knowledge, with their collections reflecting the identity of the modern Turkish state, rooted in its historical and cultural heritage.

Beyond individual instances and their legal foundation, museums were strategically organized and expanded to various cities. These cultural hubs not only facilitated artistic endeavors but also diffused the knowledge about the identity of the modern nation. Consequently, as museums began proliferating in different regions of the country, these newly established institutions became instrumental in spreading the high culture[34] of the

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32   Muhsin Ertuğrul's 1969 Cumhuriyet newspaper article, "Taksim'deki Bina" (The Building in Taksim), prompted a name change due to his critique of the conflicting terms "culture" and "palace." Ertuğrul argued that the term "palace" conveyed historical and grandiose notions inconsistent with the building's cultural identity.

33   Pelin Gürel Öngören, "Displaying Cultural Heritage, Defining Collective Identity: Museums from the Late Ottoman Empire to the Early Republican Period", METU Department of Architecture, Ankara (Unpublished PhD Dissertation) 2010, p. 158.

34   Ernest Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, Payot, Paris 1983.

new nation to every corner of the Republic. While the Ethnography Museum showcased the richness of the cumulative culture of Turkish geography, state museums were strategically designed to promote the "high culture" and the new national-identity oriented towards the Western world.

Kezer[35] conducts a critical analysis of the Ankara Ethnography Museum, focusing on the state-driven strategies within official historiography. Kezer argues that the museum serves as a significant subject of inquiry due to its embodiment of both creative and destructive impulses stemming from nationalist ideology.[36] As discussed in the literature, museums serve to objectify the supremacy of humanity and intellect, demonstrating the regime of truth and constructing a national identity, a rationale behind the transformation of 19th-century establishments as "national museums" or "state museums."[37] In this context, museums as archetypes embody dual roles akin to modern institutions. On one hand, they symbolize culture, artistic productions, and create society-specific knowledge. On the other hand, they concretely articulate and present a "regime of truth" established by national or state ideology.

During his tenure at the Ministry of Culture, Hasan Ali Yücel played a pivotal role in the conceptualization of museums as spaces of knowledge. In 1945, he conveyed the aspiration to "transform Türkiye into an extensive museum," emphasizing the notion that "cultural unity cannot be established exclusively within educational institutions."[38] He underscored the challenges of cultural education solely within schools, particularly in a city lacking libraries, museums, and theaters. Yücel articulated his perspective by asserting that museums are "educational institutions in and of themselves."[39] In the context of the central role of education as a modern institution in shaping knowledge, this statement underscores the similar capacities of museums as a heterotopia in the Foucauldian sense.[40]

Despite considerable efforts during the Early Republican period, subsequent years indicated a lack of attention to state museums, with art practices increasingly confined to private spaces and galleries. Conversely, substantial support for artists and the evolution of the art environment created a growing interest in art education. Nevertheless, museums faced limi-

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35   Zeynep Kezer, "Familiar Things in Strange Places: Ankara's Ethnography Museum and the Legacy of Islam in Republican Turkey", Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture, Vol. 8, 2000, pp. 101-116.

36   Ibid, p. 103.

37   Ali Artun, "İstanbul Resim Heykel Müzesi'ne Ne Oldu?", E-Skop, 7 May 2014, https://www.e-skop.com/skopbulten/istanbul-resim-heykel-muzesine-ne-oldu/1934.

38   Hasan Ali Yücel, Milli Eğitimle İlgili Söylev ve Demeçler, T.C. Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, Ankara 1993, pp. 268–69.

39   Elvan Altan Ergut, The Exhibition House in Ankara: building (up) the 'national' and the 'modern', The Journal of Architecture, Vol.16, No. 6, 2011, pp. 855-884.

40   Michel Foucault, Heterotopia and the City: Public Spaces in a Postcivil society, Routledge, London and New York 2008.

tations due to the absence of meta-narratives, as pointed out by critics such as Wendy Shaw.[41] Shaw draws distinctions between early Turkish museums and their Western counterparts based on their methodologies in narrating and collecting artifacts and artworks. She notes that while every Turkish city established a museum, the absence of art collections highlights a functional difference compared to Western museums.[42] Despite both being deeply involved in constructing heritage narratives, Western museums utilize an art-centric meta-discourse to contextualize civilization, while Turkish museums perceive objects as historical heritages without relying on an art-focused discourse. Despite the state's recognition of art's importance, it was not deemed significant enough to justify establishing new museums. Although the state began sponsoring exhibits in 1926, a formal directive for annual exhibitions was only introduced in 1939, two years after the establishment of the Istanbul Museum of Painting and Sculpture. State-commissioned public art, including numerous portraits of Atatürk and memorial sculptures for city squares, reflects the intentional conceptualization of Turkish art in the modern era as a means to physically represent the national identity. This illustrates how these artistic activities and spaces, as analyzed in the following section, were instrumental in constructing knowledge about the scope of the new nation.

Theaters, Cinemas and Operas

Beyond museums, the early Republic undertook the construction of additional spaces of knowledge associated with performing arts. These newly established spaces, designed to transform the cultural landscape, emerged as novel archetypes of modernity in Türkiye. Serving as pioneers among Türkiye's spaces of knowledge, People's Houses seamlessly integrated theaters and operas, emerging as innovative spaces for the education and cultivation of artists within the national identity of the young Republic.

In addition to the establishment of these spaces, institutional frameworks were designed, transforming the spaces of the previous regime into modern institutions symbolizing the identity of the new Republic. Darülbedayi transformed into the Istanbul University Conservatory in 1925, while the Music Teachers' School (Musiki Muallim Okulu), founded in 1924, designated as a state conservatory in 1940.[43] Additionally, the State Theatres were established in 1949. The new Republic was keen to raise its own artistic vision also through supporting musicians. Again reflecting the Western orientation in the formation of the new national identity, the early Republican regime sponsored "The Turkish Five",[44] who were sent abroad in the 1920s for

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41   Wendy Shaw, "Museums and Narratives of Display from the Late Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic", Muqarnas, Vol. 24, 2007, pp. 253-279.
42   Ibid. p. 269.
43   Mustafa Şahin, "Cumhuriyetin yapılanma sürecinde müzik eğitimi," Çağdaş Türkiye Tarihi Araştırmaları Dergisi, Vol. 7, No.16, 2008, pp. 259-272.
44   Necil Kâzım Akses, Hasan Ferit Alnar, Ulvi Cemal Erkin, Cemal Reşit Rey, and Ahmet

education in classical Western music. Similarly, initiated by Hasan Ali Yücel, the "Wonder Kid Law" (Harika Çocuk Yasası) of 1948 provided government financial support to İdil Biret and Suna Kan, who were sent to France to pursue their musical education,[45] with the expectation that they would contribute to shaping the musical landscape of the emerging national identity.

As the new center of the nation-state, Ankara historically served as the main hub for art institutions, while Istanbul's prominence increased notably during the 1950s and 1960s; however, this time with a new national identity. It is worth mentioning that plans for constructing a modern opera building in Istanbul were underway in 1940s,[46] predating the transformation of the Exhibition House into the State Opera and Ballet for years. During this period, Istanbul, as the most populous city in Türkiye, lacked a central cultural space, which created the urgent need for the construction of such spaces of knowledge.

Despite these efforts in the artistic landscape, it is notable that opera and ballet received comparatively less attention and were deemed inadequate. This is why the institutionalization of opera and ballet lagged behind theaters, eventually resulting in their performing under the jurisdiction of State Theatres. It was only 1970s that State Opera and Ballet Directorate General was established as a distinct institution under the Ministry of Culture. Indeed, these institutions were brought into existence through the transformation of pre-existing spaces of knowledge, exemplified by the establishment of the Izmir State Opera and Ballet. Izmir National Library, established in 1912, has been added a cinema space in following years and have become one of the main attraction centers during the early Republican period. Known as the Elhamra Stage, the cinema was inaugurated in 1926 and initially featured both Western and Turkish movies, functioning as a space of knowledge. Originally established as a financial support component of the library, the Elhamra Stage cinema gained popularity over time. Eventually, in 1982, this space of knowledge transformed into the Izmir State Opera and Ballet.[47]

The establishment of specific spaces for cinema, coupled with advancements in theaters and the promotion of artists, served as a catalyst for increased film production. Despite the adverse impact of war years on the artistic landscape, notable improvements were witnessed in the 1950s.[48] This era represented a crucial juncture in the history of Turkish cinema, characte-

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45   Yasemin Ata, "Suna Kan'ın Ardından Cumhuriyet Dönemi "Müzikte Modernleşme" İdealini Yeniden Sorgulamak", Akademik Hassasiyetler , Vol.10, 2023, p.83.

46   Süleyman Faruk Göncüoğlu, "İstanbul'un Tepesi; Bir Meydan'ın Hikâyesi 'Taksim'", *Yeni Fikir Dergisi* Vol.6, no. 13, 2014, p.24.

47   Elif Kıstır, "Trouser roles in Turkish opera", Journal for the Interdisciplinary Art and Education, Vol.2, No. 1, 2021, pp. 105-112.

48   Esra Güngör, "1950'ler Türkiye'sinde modernleşme ve gündelik hayat değişimlerine sinema üzerinden bakmak: İstanbul Geceleri filmi", Abant Kültürel Araştırmalar Dergisi, Vol.2, No.3, 2017, pp.94-112.

rized by noteworthy advancements. Numerous accomplished directors helmed their films during this period, contributing to a more national sentiment within the cinema space. Özen,[49] in his analysis, reveals that between 1950 and 1959, 540 movies were produced, with 49 adapted from popular Turkish novels while 22 from foreign sources. Özen highlights the contradiction that intellectuals from the early Republican era supported Westernization in culture but criticized the lack of Turkish identity in films, rejecting Western influences. These discussions elucidate the transformative role of cinemas as spaces of knowledge, significantly impacting the broader national cultural identity during the 1950s.

Particularly during the 1960s, with the widespread adoption of radio and television, Türkiye witnessed a surge in the prominence of cinema, becoming a part of daily cultural practices. The proliferation of radios and televisions in households gained momentum in the 1950s and intensified during the 1960s. The establishment of Turkish Radio and Television (TRT) in December 1963 marked a pivotal moment, expanding the reach of radio and television broadcasts to a broader audience across the country.[50] Together with radio and television, the national identity through a specific form of knowledge was also reaching out to wider citizens. They played a pivotal role in easing the process of nation-building and the formation of a modern national identity by enabling the creation of "imagined communities."[51] Therefore, the nation's changing political landscape and political power played an influential role in shaping cultural politics and media dynamics.

The National Library

Libraries are one of the most significant examples of spaces of knowledge. As stated by Burke, academic knowledge is a "kind of intellectual tripod composed of curricula, libraries and encyclopedias."[52] As he maintains, libraries as a system of classification and order of books, make the knowledge material, physical, and spatial.[53] Acknowledging "library" as a heterotopia, as defined by Foucault,[54] provides a central approach to understand library in relation to modernization and nation building processes. The primary societal role of the modern library, forming its enduring cultural legacy, lies in its archetypical characteristic. Libraries provide society members with the

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49   Emrah Özen, "Sinemamızın Şahsiyet Azabı: Ellili Yıllarda Yerli Film/ Türk Filmi Ayrımı Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme", Türkiye'nin Ellili Yılları, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul 2015, p. 489-490.

50   Nuray Keskin, "Altmışlı Yıllarda Kamu Yönetimi", Mete Kaan Kaynar ed., Türkiye'nin Altmışlı Yılları, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul 2017, p. 890.

51   Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism, Verso, London 2016.

52   Peter Burke, The Social History of Knowledge: From Gutenberg to Diderot, Polity Press, Cambridge 2008, p. 87.

53   Ibid, p. 92.

54   Michel Foucault, Heterotopia and the City: Public Spaces in a Postcivil society, Routledge, London and New York 2008.

broadest array of knowledge on their community, adding a cultural content to the organization and delivery of such entities. In this context, the availability of the knowledge on the national identity has increased through libraries and the citizens' right to access information.[55]

Libraries, functioning as archetypes, are shaped by the interplay of culture, knowledge, and physical space. Consequently, constraining the conceptualization of a library to a mere facility housing books would underestimate its societal role. On the contrary, a library constitutes a public space, and its significance is fundamentally derived from the importance ascribed to knowledge.[56] The resources available in this public space are dependent upon the prevailing political power. Hence, libraries act as intermediaries in accessing to knowledge. In the modern period, libraries evolved into public spaces that embody and facilitate the context of a national identity.[57] The defining characteristics of a nation are rooted in its history, language, and traditions—essentially, the cultural narratives established around specific archetypes. Consequently, public libraries do not only document the previous knowledge; they are also affecting what is happening now. As stated by Ötüken, national library serves as the collective memory of a nation, connecting its history with the future of its ideas and knowledge.[58]

In this sense, it is challenging to study libraries on a worldwide scale because "the social and political traditions of every country produce a distinctive library type."[59] However, public libraries in various national contexts underscore a connection between the library space and the nation-building process. They accommodate a unique identity with distinctive traces.[60] Generally, the primary purpose of a national library is to acquire and safeguard all written materials within a country for the benefit of future generations. Additional characteristics, such as the library's role, its capabilities, and the presence of other public collections,[61] are dependent on the context political power.

Contextualizing libraries as institutions beyond a mere physical space that embody a broader archetype of institutionalized knowledge, displays their significant role and capacity in Türkiye's modernization. Indeed, the origins of the first national library in Türkiye trace back to the Ottoman

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55   Francis Miksa, "The Cultural Legacy of the Modern Library for the Future", Journal of Education for Library and Information Science, Vol. 37, No. 2, Spring 1996, p. 107.

56   James K. Elmborg, "Libraries as the Spaces Between Us: Recognizing and Valuing the Third Space", Reference & User Services Quarterly, Vol. 50, No. 4, Summer 2011, pp. 338-339.

57   Nan Dahlkild, "The Emergence and Challenge of the Modern Library Building: Ideal Types, Model Libraries, and Guidelines, from the Enlightenment to the Experience Economy", Library Trends, Vol. 60, No. 1, Summer 2011, p. 40.

58   Adnan Ötüken, Milli Kütüphane ve Adnan Ötüken, Milli Kütüphane Yayınları, Ankara 1972, p. 3.

59   Avrupa Milli Kütüphaneler Kollogyumu, Milli kütüphaneler görevleri ve sorunları, (transl. Behire Abacıoğlu), Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, Ankara 1963, p. IX.

60   Ibid., p. IX.

61   Ibid., p. 1.

period, marked by the establishment of the Beyazıt Public Library. This library was established through encompassing numerous manuscripts, modern books, and a compilation of nineteenth and early twentieth-century newspapers.[62] Originally named "Kütüphane-i Umûmî-i Osmanî" in 1884, it later became known as the Beyazıt Public Library. While it remains a noteworthy library in Türkiye, it is very challenging to classify this as a national library.

Following the relocation of the capital from Istanbul to Ankara during the establishment of the Republic, the construction of governmental and institutional facilities in the newly designated capital with the emerging national and modern identity became an imperative. The legislation for a National Library was formalized in 1946, as articulated by the Prime Minister.[63] However, Ötüken, who was the first national librarian of Türkiye and the founder of the National Library, posited that there were earlier discussions about a national library in the 1930s, which he contended were more than mere speculations.[64] Ernst Egli, the principal architect for the Ministry of National Education between 1927 and 1936, collaborated with his German archeologist colleague, Prof. Dr. Eckhard Unger, to design a comprehensive cultural and educational complex at the Ulus Citadel, the old town. This complex, intended to house the National Library, a museum, and an academy, has never been constructed.[65] Öngören›s[66] study, featuring original drawings published for the first time, reveals that the Ulus project was thematically conceived as the Hittite Museum, a national museum. Despite modern institutional traits in the project, the architectural design exhibited monumental features with historical elements, revealing its role as a space of knowledge constructing the new national identity. The proposed project, influenced by contemporary structures such as the Art Library in Berlin and the British Museum in London, faced challenges in implementation for almost a decade due to financial constraints.

In a parliamentary address in 1946, Prime Minister Mehmet Recep Peker underscored the implementation of measures to establish a significant national library in Ankara.[67] Ötüken›s dedicated efforts played a pivotal role during this period. The legal framework to establish the library under the

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62   Lawrence S. Thompson, "The Libraries of Turkey", The Library Quarterly, Vol. 22, No. 3, July 1952, pp. 270-284.

63   Irfan Neziroglu – Tuncer Yilmaz, Başbakanlarımızın Genel Kurul Konuşmaları, TBMM Basımevi, Ankara 2014, p.246.

64   Adnan Ötüken, Milli Kütüphane ve Adnan Ötüken, Milli Kütüphane Yayınları, Ankara 1972.

65   Pelin Gürol Öngören, "Ernst A. Egli 'nin Ankara'da İnşa Edilecek Milli Kütüphane, Akademi ve Müze Projesi", Mimarlık, Vol. 387, 2016, pp.32-38.

66   Pelin Gürel Öngören, "Displaying Cultural Heritage, Defining Collective Identity: Museums from the Late Ottoman Empire to the Early Republican Period", METU Department of Architecture, Ankara (Unpublished PhD Dissertation) 2010, p. 198.

67   Irfan Neziroglu – Tuncer Yilmaz, Başbakanlarımızın Genel Kurul Konuşmaları, TBMM Basımevi, Ankara 2014, p.246.

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Ministry of National Education, Directorate of Publications, was enacted in 1946 by the Peker government. Despite an initial endeavor to construct a national library, no further public actions were taken for several years. Subsequently, the National Library received official planning in 1950, with specific legal developments. Notably, the enactment of the Printed Manuscripts and Paintings Procurement Law (Basma Yazı ve Resimleri Derleme Kanunu) in 1934, the establishment of the National Library Bibliography Institute in 1955, the creation of the Librarian Training Department at Ankara University in 1954, and the publication of Lawrence Thompson's report[68] on Turkish libraries exemplified crucial advancements in the field.

The National Library, initially with the name 'Preliminary National Library Bureau', in its establishment symbolically housed two books by Mehmet Emin Yurdakul,[69] acknowledged as one of the earliest national poets. This arrangement reflected the close connection between the evolving national identity of the modern state and the library space. The collection rapidly expanded to 8000 books; and the absence of official funding to cover expenses led to the establishment of the 'Benevolent National Library Association' on February 21, 1947.[70] Consequently, the Law on the Foundation of the National Library was ratified on March 23, 1950, formally establishing the institution as a legal entity. In spite of this, Thompson[71] noted that the National Library officially welcomed the public in August 1948, despite the Ministry of National Education having been acquiring Turkish books, periodicals, and newspapers for fifteen years prior.

As previously noted, financial challenges significantly impacted the history of the National Library in Türkiye. The aftermath of World War II brought about a crisis in construction materials and resources. On the other hand, the priorities of the Democrat Party government, focused primarily on economic growth, led to the postponement of the construction of the National Library during the postwar period. Consequently, the actual library was relocated to temporary spaces frequently. In 1948, the initial library space was moved to the social club/meeting area in Ankara's Saraçoğlu Neighborhood project. This club, initially a local meeting point, later transformed into the Ankara People's Library, named in honor of Adnan Ötüken. However, the existing building proved insufficient for the requirements of a national library, prompting plans for a new facility in the mid-1960s. A competition for the National Library project in Bahçelievler was organized in 1968 by the Ministry of Public Works. However, the winning project was never re-

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68   Lawrence S. Thompson, "The Libraries of Turkey", The Library Quarterly, Vol. 22, No. 3, July 1952, pp. 270-284.
69   Leman Şenalp, ''Milli Kütüphane Kuruluş Yılları Üzerine,'' Türk Kütüphaneciliği, Vol.22, No.4, 2008, p.466.
70   Gönül Büyüklimanlı eds. Geçmişten Geleceğe Köprü: Milli Kütüphane, Milli Kütüphane Yayınları, Ankara 2011, p. 22-23.
71   Lawrence S. Thompson, "The Libraries of Turkey", The Library Quarterly, Vol. 22, No. 3, July 1952, p. 273.

alized. İlhan Tekeli asserted that the Ministry hindered the construction of the winning project, though he did not specify the reason.[72] However, it is known that the jury faced criticism for selecting a design that did not adhere to the tender requirements, and the building's appearance was disputed by those who argued that it lacked a distinctive characteristic representing the national vision of the time. Particularly, although the project drew inspiration from traditional elements like *cumba*s, critics contended that the unique traditional references were insufficient for a library.[73]

During the post-war era, especially in the 1960s, there was a notable surge of interest in libraries in Türkiye. Librarians and the UNESCO Turkish National Commission published several books during this period. One notable publication, "National Libraries: Missions and Problems", resulted from a colloquium held in Vienna in 1958. Türkiye actively participated as one of the 25 member countries, and the colloquium saw representation from 34 national libraries. Following these initiatives, the realization of a national library finally took shape with the collaborative efforts of various national architects.[74] Commissioned by the Ministry in the late 1970s, the final design covered over 52,000 square meters, a significant expansion from the original jury proposal of 30,000 square meters in 1968.[75] These substantial increase in numbers emphasize its role as a vast public space representing the nation. This architectural endeavor reached fruition with the inauguration of the building in 1983, marking a significant milestone in Türkiye's dedication to fostering a robust library culture.

Examining the history of the National Library reveals substantial efforts spent for the advancement of these institutions since the early Republican period. However, these endeavors did not result in the instant construction of the National Library. The prolonged duration between the legalization and inauguration of the building signifies that, despite its recognized role as a modern institution, public space, and representation of the nation, there were challenges in realizing associated projects. Thus, the overlooked yet significant efforts serve as an indication of the changing political power and cultural landscape during the Turkish modernization process.

Conclusion

The complex interplay of modernization, knowledge production, cultural identity, and nation-building during the early years of the Turkish Republic is revealed through a detailed examination of crucial spaces of knowledge. This exploration started with People's Houses, dynamic hubs designed to spread Republican principles and the emerging national identity. Essen-

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72   İlhan Tekeli, "Tanıdığım Yönleriyle Şevki Vanlı", Mimarlık, Vol.334, 2008, pp. 13-19.
73   Polat Sökmen, "Bir Kollokyumun Düşündürdükleri", Mimarlık, Vol.7, No. 2, 1969, p.12.
74   Mimarizm, Milli Kütüphane için Telif Mücadelesi, http://www.mimarizm.com/haberler/milli-kutuphane-binasi-icin-telif-mucadelesi_117796.
75   Levent Aksüt - Yaşar Marulyalı, Milli Kütüphane Yarışması Kolokyumu Üzerine, Mimarlık, Vol.7, No.3, 1969, p.12.

tially, these Houses acted as hubs for cultural exchange, demonstrating the nation's dedication to creating a new national identity. Similarly, museums emerged as tangible expressions of the Republic's dedication to constructing a cultural heritage within the scope of a national identity. Additionally, the spaces related with performing arts took center stage in transforming the cultural landscape. Theaters, cinemas, and operas, supported by the state, became pioneers in contributing significantly to the creation of a distinct national cultural identity. From the historical legacy of the Beyazıt Public Library to the establishment of the National Library, shows the crystallization of spaces of knowledge as a symbol of identity construction in Turkish Republic. Despite challenges in construction and funding, the National Library stands as a testament to the nation's dedication to creating a vast public space representing its modern identity.

The in-depth exploration of these spaces of knowledge reveals that cultural institutions, from People's Houses to museums, became agents of modernization, shaping societal perceptions and fostering a unified Turkish identity. The interplay between these spaces and political power is evident, with the closure of People's Houses in the 1950s. This is reflecting the political dimensions inherent in cultural institutions and construction of spaces of knowledge. Challenges in institutionalization, particularly witnessed in the National Library's construction, unveil the complexities of translating cultural aspirations into tangible spaces and their close relationship with political procedures. The integration of theaters, operas, and cinemas into cultural policy, on the other hand, underscores the relationship between cultural institutions, art and nation building through a certain identity. State support for artists, musicians, and filmmakers mirrors a conscious effort to foster a unique Turkish cultural identity, blended with Western civilizational forms. Museums, libraries, and theaters emerge not merely as repositories of culture but as archetypes reflecting national narratives. The articulation of a regime of truth in museums and libraries aligns with broader efforts of nation-building and national identity, contributed to the construction of a distinctive Turkish cultural identity since the early Republican periods.

In conclusion, these spaces of knowledge in the early Turkish Republic represents the nation's aspirations for modernity and cultural development. Woven into the struggles and successes of People's Houses, museums, theaters, cinemas, and the National Library are the dynamic product of the complex relationship between political power, knowledge and space. As these historical spaces are navigated, it is visible that their legacy persists, shaping contemporary discussions on cultural heritage, national identity, and control of knowledge in Türkiye.

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